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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/876,432	06/07/2001	David T. Berquist	56777USA3A.002	8956

7590 01/15/2003

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
PO Box 33427
St. Paul, MN 55133-3427

EXAMINER

KOYAMA, KUMIKO C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2876

DATE MAILED: 01/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

- I. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-49 and 67-74, drawn to inventory methods of items having an RFID tag, classified in class 235, subclass 385.
 - II. Claims 57-66, drawn to converting a non-RFID-tagged item to a RFID-tagged item, classified in class 235, subclass 383.
 - III. Claims 50-56, drawn to altering a permissible error tolerance, classified in class 235, subclass 375.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions Group I and Group II are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the a non-RFID-tagged item may be converted to a RFID-tagged item using a different method other than that of Group II in order to utilize the inventory method of Group I. The subcombination has separate utility such as tracking vehicles, animals, or people. The subcombination can also be used to identify the content of the item.

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3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Inventions Group I and Group III are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the inventory methods of Group I are still operable even without altering the permissible error tolerance give in Group III. The subcombination has separate utility such as utility such as tracking vehicles (for non-inventorial purpose), animals, or people.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. Inventions Group II and Group III are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the methods of Group II are still operable even without altering the permissible error tolerance give in Group III. The subcombination has separate utility such as utility such as tracking vehicles (for non-inventorial purpose), animals, or people.

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7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group II is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Drawings

9. There were no drawings submitted with this application. 37 CFR 1.83(a) requires that the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the RFID data collection and use must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). The examiner respectfully requests the Applicant to submit drawings. No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kumiko C. Koyama whose telephone number is 703-305-5425. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7am-3:30pm.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached on 703-305-3503. The fax phone numbers for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7722 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

kck
January 9, 2003



MICHAEL G. LEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800